

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended) A filter body, particularly for filtering particulates present in the exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising:

a plurality of one-piece blocks; and

seals assembled with said blocks, a nature of a material of said seals being different from a nature of a material of said blocks,

~~at least one of a plurality of~~ said blocks ~~each~~ comprising a plurality of flow channels for said exhaust gases, each of said channels being bounded by a side wall, a plug and an opening terminating outwardly, wherein a first portion of the side wall of at least one of said channels, called, ~~the~~ "reinforced channel", comprises a reinforcement compared to ~~the rest remaining portions~~ of said side wall ~~forming that form~~ a second portion of said side wall, ~~the a~~ ratio of ~~the a~~ thickness of said first portion to ~~the a~~ thickness of said second portion, in a transverse plane of section, being always between 1.1 and 3, the filter body comprising a plurality of adjacent reinforced channels arranged so that each said first portion of said reinforced channels form a continuous reinforcing partition, a thickness of said reinforcing partition is substantially constant,

wherein said reinforcement is substantially constant for all the reinforced channels of a group in any transverse plane of section and/or in any longitudinal plane.

19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) The filter body as claimed in claim ~~19~~ 18, wherein said reinforced channels of said group extend to ~~the~~ a periphery of said block.

21. (currently amended) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said first portion comprises an external face defining an ~~in contact with the~~ exterior of said block.

22. (currently amended) The filter body as claimed in claim ~~19~~ 18, wherein said reinforced channels of said group are arranged so that said reinforcing partition overlaps a longitudinal edge of said filter block.

23. (currently amended) The filter body as claimed in claim ~~19~~ 18, wherein said group of reinforced channels comprises all ~~the~~ peripheral channels of said block so that said reinforcing partition surrounds said block, ~~preferably~~ so that said reinforcing partition is at ~~the~~ an external surface of said block.

24. (previously presented) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said ratio is constant irrespective of the transverse plane of section considered.

25. (previously presented) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said reinforcement is substantially constant in any longitudinal plane of section of said block.

26. (canceled)

27. (currently amended) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein said ratio R is between 1.9 and 2.1, ~~preferably is substantially equal to 2.~~

28. (canceled)

29. (currently amended) An extrusion die conformed to form, by extrusion of a ceramic material, a structure provided with channels suitable for the fabrication of a filter block ~~as claimed in claim 18~~ comprising a plurality of flow channels for exhaust gases, each of said channels being bounded by a side wall, a plug and an opening terminating outwardly, wherein a first portion of the side wall of at least one of said channels, called, "reinforced channel", comprises a reinforcement compared to the rest of said side wall forming a second portion of said side wall, a ratio of a thickness of said first portion to a thickness of said second portion, in a transverse plane of section, being always between 1.1 and 3, said structure comprising said reinforcement.

30. (currently amended) A method for fabricating a block ~~as claimed in claim 18~~ comprising a plurality of flow channels for exhaust gases, each of said channels being bounded by a side wall, a plug and an opening terminating outwardly, wherein a first portion of the side wall of at least one of said channels, called, "reinforced channel", comprises a reinforcement compared

to the rest of said side wall forming a second portion of said side wall, a ratio of a thickness of said first portion to a thickness of said second portion, in a transverse plane of section, being always between 1.1 and 3, said method comprising the following successive steps:

extrusion of a ceramic material through a die having a structure provided with channels suitable for the fabrication of a said filter block, said structure comprising said reinforcement, to form a porous honeycomb structure, and

drying and sintering of said porous structure to obtain said filter block.

31-33. (cancelled)

34. (currently amended) A method for fabricating a filter body by assembling a plurality of filter blocks, wherein ~~at least one~~ a plurality of said filter blocks each comprise a plurality of flow channels for exhaust gases, each of said channels being bounded by a side wall, a plug and an opening terminating outwardly, wherein a first portion of the side wall of at least one of said channels, called, "reinforced channel", comprises a reinforcement compared to the rest of said side wall forming a second portion of said side wall, a ratio of a thickness of said first portion to a thickness of said second portion, in a transverse plane of section, being always between 1.1 and 3, the filter body comprising a plurality of adjacent reinforced channels arranged so that each said first portion of said reinforced channels form a continuous reinforcing partition,

a thickness of said reinforcing partition is substantially constant, and wherein each of said plurality of filter blocks is fabricated by a method as claimed in claim 30 the following successive steps:

extrusion of a ceramic material through a die having a structure provided with channels suitable for the fabrication of each of said filter blocks, said structure comprising said reinforcement, to form a porous honeycomb structure; and  
drying and sintering of said porous structure to obtain said filter blocks.

35. (previously presented) A filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein at least one of said ~~block~~ blocks presents the shape of a rectangular parallelepiped.

36. (previously presented) A filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein the assembled blocks have said reinforcement along their whole external surface.

37. (cancelled)

38. (previously presented) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein the reinforcement of the reinforcing partition is arranged so that, in any transverse plane of section, a flow cross section of a reinforced inlet channel and a reinforced

outlet channel are substantially identical to those of the other inlet and outlet channels.

39. (new) The filter body as claimed in claim 27, wherein said ratio is substantially equal to 2.

40. (new) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein a thickness of internal portions of the side walls of peripheral channels of said blocks is identical to a thickness of walls of internal channels of said blocks.

41. (new) The filter body as claimed in claim 18, wherein a cross-section of inlet channels is different from that of outlet channels.